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## THE EGYPTIAN HEAVEN AND HELL

Deeply grounded in the religious ideas of the ancient Egyptians was the belief in a life beyond the grave, and their conceptions in regard to this life took definite shape at a very remote period. Here, as elsewhere, the characteristic conservatism of the Egyptians led them to retain, alongside of the more refined beliefs of an advanced civilization, the crude ideas of a primitive age, but at all times their conception of a future state was sufficiently material. With due allowance for the many variations in matters of detail to be found at various periods, the state of the blessed dead was a glorified reproduction of the life of the present world, while the gruesome imagination of the scribes depicted with grim realism the horrors in store for the damned. The purer doctrine of the religion of Osiris represented the fate of the dead in the next world as the reward or punishment of the deeds done in the body, and it cannot be doubted that this ethical doctrine was held by a numerous body of the Egyptians down to the latest times. Yet here again an incongruous element was superimposed. The faith in magic, handed down from primitive times, remained in full force, and it was very currently believed that by the use of "words of power" the deceased could, in the world beyond the grave, avoid all perils, overcome all obstacles, force his way into the abode of the blessed, and claim full participation in all the privileges enjoyed by its denizens. A result of this belief was the dull formalism which, in time, sapped all that was vital in the ancient religion, and against which the attempted reformation of Amenophis IV was, in part at least, a protest. Long before 3,000 B. C. magical formulae intended for the benefit of the dead had crystallized into shape, and the development of this important branch of magic may be traced from the Pyramid Texts of the Fifth or Sixth Dynasties, through the inscriptions on the coffin boards of the Middle Empire, to the Book of the Dead of the New Empire. The latter work, called by the Egyptians *Pr m hrw*, "coming forth by day," seems to have attained its final form under the Eighteenth or Nineteenth Dynasties, although it underwent a later recension about 600 B. C. In the main it represents the religion of Osiris, though with some encroachments, especially on the fact of the priesthood of Amon of Thebes, then the prevailing theological school in Egypt. The Pyramid Texts are not accompanied by pictures; these first appear about the time of the Eleventh Dynasty and thenceforward their use becomes increasingly frequent. From these interesting illustrations it is evident that, even at this period, the Egyptian priests and magicians had formulated their conception of the world beyond the grave in such way that they were prepared, not only to describe it in the texts, but even to represent pictorially both its topographical

features and the beings inhabiting it. Such representations had, of course, a practical use. While the texts furnished the deceased, in his journey through the realm of the departed, an effective means of overcoming all dangers and of securing his welfare, the illustrations would familiarize him with the localities through which he must pass and the appearance of the beings to be met with, thus enabling him to avoid straying into the numerous pitfalls that beset his path and to recognize the maleficent spirits and divinities lying in wait for him. In the time of the New Empire the principal book of the underworld was the Book of the Dead already referred to. At the same time, however, two other illustrated guides to Hades seem to have enjoyed considerable vogue, *Am Duat* or "(The Book of) that which is in Hades," and "The Book of Gates." Both these books trace the path of the sun-god as he sails in his boat through the portals of the western horizon and journeys on through the realm of the dead until he reappears in the east in the morning, his course being divided into twelve stadia corresponding to the twelve hours of the night. The accompanying illustrations present in full detail the scenes through which the god passes and the spirits and divinities, beneficent or malevolent, that line his path, while the names of all the infernal personages or localities are carefully noted. On their general plan the two books are very similar, but they differ considerably in their presentation of the subject. In *Am Duat* the twelve stadia are divided by ember doors, while in the Book of Gates the gates are strong fortifications defended by fire-spewing serpents and other monsters which yield only to the words of power by force of which the god gains admission. Both books exhibit a curious syncretism of tenets and myths derived from various localities and periods, but the Book of Gates adheres more closely to the teaching of the Book of the Dead, and in it greater prominence is given to the doctrine of Osiris. The book *Am Duat* also exists in an abridged form without illustrations, doubtless intended for those whose means forbade the purchase of the larger or more costly work.

The first two volumes of Dr. Budge's work<sup>1</sup> present the complete text and all the illustrations of the two books *Am Duat* and the Book of Gates, as well as the abridgment of the former, with a translation of the text and an explanation of the illustrations. The third volume contains a brief general introduction and a detailed analysis of the contents of the two books. The work in fact is not, as the title would suggest, a comprehensive study of the views of the Egyptians concerning heaven and hell, but rather a presentation of the views on this subject set forth in the two illustrated guides to

<sup>1</sup> *The Egyptian Heaven and Hell*. By E. A. Wallis Budge. 3 vols. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co.; Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1906. 816 pages.

Hades, here edited entire, with some indications as to their proper historical setting. In his theory that the book *Am Duat* was composed with the view of asserting the absolute supremacy of Amon-Re in the Other World (Vol. III, p. 85) Dr. Budge is probably right, although the book is distinctly not religious, but magical, and appears to be the production, not of sober theologians, but of a school of religious mystics. His contention, however, that the Book of Gates was composed as a protest against the book *Am Duat*, in which Osiris occupies a subordinate position, in order to reassert the ancient Osirian doctrine, is open to serious doubt. While much greater prominence is given to Osiris, Re is here too the central figure, and the book bears all the earmarks of Theban influence. It is, in fact, a work of precisely the same class as *Am Duat*, although its mysticism takes a somewhat different direction. Bearing in mind the readiness with which apparently conflicting religious views were accepted by the Egyptians, and the strong tendency to interidentify divinities, even when their attributes are wholly dissimilar, it is entirely possible that there was no real conflict between the two books or the mystical schools of which they were the exponents. That they were not considered irreconcilable by the Egyptians themselves is shown by the fact that both books are found inscribed in the tomb of Seti I.

Dr. Budge's presentation of the material is orderly and clear; the illustrations, which form a vital part of the work, are admirably reproduced; and the typography is excellent. The very full index at the close of the third volume is most convenient, and the addition of the chapter on the reunion of the family in the next world (Vol. III, pp. 64-79) is especially welcome. Dr. Budge's handy edition of these interesting, if somewhat bizarre, books forms a useful supplement to his well-known edition of the Book of the Dead issued nine years ago.

CHRISTOPHER JOHNSTON

BALTIMORE, MD.

### HELLENISTIC RELIGION IN EGYPT

The first volume of Otto's work<sup>1</sup> was prepared as a thesis for the doctor's degree at the University of Breslau, and one section (II, 2) was printed a year earlier as the dissertation. In its present form it includes two distinct but closely related topics. Unfortunately, the break between the two volumes does not come at the close of the first topic (priests), but in the

<sup>1</sup> *Priester und Tempel im hellenistischen Aegypten: Ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte des Hellenismus*. Von Walter Otto. Band I. Leipzig und Berlin: Teubner, 1905. xiv + 418 pages. M. 14.